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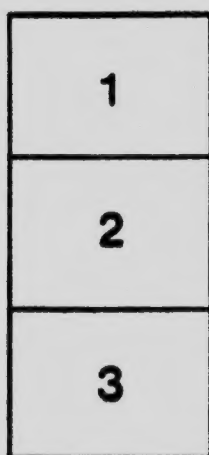
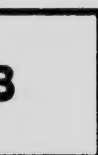
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The Mystery and History
—OF—
BABYLON

(Rev. xvii and xviii)



By
Frank S. Weston
Toronto



*“Scripture is in process of fulfilment
before our eyes.”—Sir Andrew Wingate*



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Babylon in Mystery



"I saw a woman . . . and upon her forehead a name written, Mystery, Babylon the Great."—Rev. 17: 3-5.

To what does this verse refer? I think this question can be easily answered. The Mystery Babylon is primarily Rome.

The Marks of Identification

The *place* in which John saw the woman is evidence that Rome is intended. "He carried me away in the spirit into a wilderness." Rome stands in the midst of a wilderness. Says Burgess: "The surrounding country, called the Campagna of Rome, has been happily designated 'a marble wilderness.' Even before you leave the gates of Rome you find yourself in a desert." ("Rome in XIX Century," p. 421.)

Gibbon says: "The greater part of the Campagna of Rome is reduced to a dreary and desolate wilderness." ("Rome," B. vi., p. 643.)

"The seven heads are seven mountains on which the woman sitteth." Rome was al-

ways the city of the seven hills. In John's day she was usually called the seven-hilled city, and was celebrated as such in an annual festival called the *Septimontium*. Nor is that all. On the imperial medals of that age, which are still preserved, we see Rome figured as a woman on seven hills.

The *description* John gives of the woman connects her with Rome.

"The woman whom thou sawest is the great city which holdeth the dominion over the kings of the earth."

Rome ruled the world when John wrote the Revelation. Her sway was unchallenged.

"The woman was arrayed in purple and scarlet, and decked with gold and precious stones and pearls." Scarlet is the color of Rome. It is reserved to the pontiff and cardinals. The inner color of the cloak of the Pope is scarlet, his carriage is scarlet, the carpet on which he treads is scarlet. The hats, cloaks and stockings of the cardinals are this color. The Pope's vest at enthronement is encrusted with pearls, and his mitre is heavy with gold and precious stones.

Even Roman Catholic divines admit that this description fits Rome. Cardinal Bellar-

mine says: "St. John in the Apocalypse calls Rome Babylon: for no other city besides Rome reigned in his age over the kings of the earth, and it is well-known that Rome was seated upon seven hills." The language of the celebrated French Prelate Bossuet, in his Exposition of Revelation, is: "The features are so marked that it is easy to decipher Rome under the figure of Babylon."

It is said that the papal crown bore the word "Mystery" on its front for some time, and was removed by Julius III., he having had his attention drawn to this 17th chapter of the Revelation. It is certain that the peacock fans which once waved about the Babylonian pontiffs now turn their myriad eyes upon the sedan chair in the modern Vatican.

This being true, what is the historic relation of Babylon to Rome, and why should Rome be called Babylon in mystery? That Rome and Babylon were related seems to have been well known in earlier days. St. Augustine, in his "City of God," calls Rome a second Babylon. "Babylon," he says, "is a former Rome, and Rome a later Babylon. Rome is a daughter of Babylon."

The Cult of Ancient Babylon

To trace the connection it will be necessary to look at ancient Babylon. This city on the banks of the Euphrates was begun by Nimrod, described as a "mighty hunter." (Gen. 10:8-10.) This man was a rebel against God. His city was the seat of the first great apostasy. In his days, or shortly after, the Babylonian cult was invented, a system claiming to possess the highest wisdom and to reveal the divinest secrets. Once admitted into this order men were no longer Babylonians, Assyrians or Egyptians, but members of a mystical brotherhood, over whom was placed a pontiff, or high priest, whose word was law.

The ostensible objects of worship were the Supreme Father, the incarnate female, or queen of heaven, and the Son: but the two last—the queen of heaven and her son—were in reality the only objects of worship, as the Supreme Father was said not to interfere in mortal affairs. (Nimrod III., p. 329.)

This system is believed to have come from fallen angels and demons, and the object was to rule the world by these teachings. By this means the Adversary of God planned to

counteract the truth of God. He is following the same plan now. (1 Tim. 4:1, 2.)

From Babylon this apostasy spread unto the ends of the earth. All false teaching and all idolatry has its source in Babylon. (Jer. 51:7; Rev. 18:3.)

From Babylon issued three streams. These continued fundamentally alike, though quite separate, as each had its own high-priest. The divisions were centered in Pergamos, Memphis and Thibet. From books on Thibet we learn that the system continues there to this day. Let us trace the two western streams. In 487 B.C., the city of Babylon was taken by Xerxes and the inhabitants were slaughtered. The Babylonian priesthood being forced to leave Babylon removed to Pergamos, which became for some time their headquarters. The Lord remarks on this in the Revelation: "I know where thou dwellest, even where Satan's throne is." (Rev. 3:13.) Pergamos was the headquarters of this apostasy in John's day. When Attalus, the pontiff and king of Pergamos, died (133 B.C.), he bequeathed the headship of the Babylonian priesthood to Rome.

When the Etruscans came to Italy from Lydia (the region of Pergamos) they brought with them the Babylonian religion and rites. They set up a pontiff, who was head of the priesthood, and had the power of life and death over them. Later the Romans accepted this pontiff as their civil ruler. Julius Caesar was made pontiff of the Etruscan order in 74 B.C. In 63 B.C. he was made Supreme Pontiff of the Babylonian order, thus becoming heir to the rights and titles of Attalus, Pontiff of Pergamos, who had made Rome his heir by will.

Thus the first Roman Emperor was the head of the Babylonian priesthood, and so Rome became the successor of Babylon. Henceforth Rome's religion was that of Babylon. In the year 218 A.D. the Roman army, quartered in Syria, having rebelled against Macrinus, elected Elagabalus to be emperor. This man was high-priest of the Egyptian branch of Babylonianism. He was shortly after chosen supreme pontiff by the Romans, and thus the two western branches of the Babylonian apostasy centred in the ROMAN EMPEROR.

The EMPERORS of Rome continued to exercise this office of supreme pontiff till the

year 376 A.D., when the Emperor Gratian refused to attire himself in the high-priest's robes. Milner, in his "History of the Church," thus speaks of Gratian: "From his earliest years there appear unquestionable marks of real godliness in Gratian, to a degree beyond anything that has yet been seen in any Roman Emperor. One of his first actions demonstrates this. The title of high-priest always belonged to the Roman princes. He justly observed that as its whole nature was idolatrous, it became not a Christian to assume it. He, therefore, refused the habit, though the pagans give him the title." This was in 376 A.D. Religious matters soon became so disorganized that it was found absolutely necessary to elect some one to fill the office.

Babylon and Rome United

The issue was that Damasus, the Bishop of the Christian Church of Rome, was elected to this position. This Damasus had been made Bishop of the Church in 366 A.D., through the influence of the monks of Mt. Carmel, a college of Babylonian worship originally founded by the priests of Jezebel

(long before Christ), and continued to-day in connection with Rome. So in 378 the head of the Babylonian order became the ruler of the Christian Church. This man Damasus united in himself the office of a Christian bishop, and all the titles and powers of the high-priesthood of the old Babylonian apostasy. *Satan united Babylon and Rome in one religious system.*

This explains Rev. 17, "Mystery Babylon." All the teachings of old Babylon went to Rome. The emperors for 400 years (B.C. 63 to A.D. 376) were Babylonian high-priests. Then in 378 the head of the Church of Christ in Rome took the place of Supreme Pontiff. Thus Romanism incarnates Babylon. Her worship is idolatrous, her ceremonies and observances are Babylonish. Her doctrines are not from God.

Soon after Damasus was made Supreme Pontiff the rites of Babylon began to come to the front. The worship of the Virgin Mary was set up in the year 381 A.D. Mary was everywhere worshipped as the mother of God, the Queen of Heaven. At the close of the fourth century this worship was general: "The worship of the Queen of Heaven had superseded the worship of Christ." (Gibbon.)

Under Damasus the heathen temples were restored and beautified and the rituals re-established. One point alone was insisted upon, and that was that the many named goddesses should henceforth be called Mary. Thus the Queen of Heaven, of the Babylonian cult, occupies the place of the Lord Jesus Christ in the professedly Christian Church of Rome.

All these changes, and this corruption, was not introduced without protest from those faithful to the Lord. Nestorius (428 A.D.) and others raised their voices to declare the Virgin was not God, but the protest was unavailing. Anastasius, preaching in the cathedral at Constantinople, declared with energy, "Let no man call Mary mother of God, for Mary was only a woman." Solemn curses were pronounced upon all who refused to worship Mary, and the festival of her assumption into heaven was imposed upon the Church to be observed throughout the empire.

In the Old Testament the foe to Jehovah, the true God, and Jerusalem, His holy place, was Babylon.

God gave Babylon civil power, and with this power she carried away God's people

into captivity. When Babylon literal was no more, Rome came into power and has continued the antagonism to God.

Rome crucified our Lord, burned Jerusalem, and carried away the sacred vessels of the temple. Moreover, she has ever since corrupted the truth and opposed vital godliness.

In relation to God's work Rome is Babylon. But it is Babylon away from her place. It is mystery Babylon, not literal Babylon. The moral characteristics are the same, but the location is changed.

Church "Festivals" are Babylonian

All the outstanding festivals of the Church of Rome, such as Christmas, Easter, St. John's Day, Lady Day, etc., can be shown to be Babylonian in origin. They have no relation to Christ. No such festivals were celebrated in the Christian Church for two hundred years after Christ. There is no ground for them in the Bible. They are a part of Satan's ritual.

Long before the coming of our Lord a festival was held on December 24th or 25th by the heathen people. It was held in honor of the birth of the Son of the Babylonian Queen Astarte. The Chaldeans called it

Yule Day—Yule being the Chaldee for child.

There is no certainty that Christ was born in December. We do not know the date of His birth. But, Rome, anxious to conciliate the heathen and swell the ranks of nominal Christians, adopted this heathen festival on December 25th, and gave it the name of Christmas. It is not known just when this was done officially. "It was not observed prior to the fourth century." (International Encyclopedia.)

The Christmas-tree now so well known was equally common to pagan Rome and heathen Egypt. The legend is that on Christmas Eve the yule-log was cast into the fire and changed next morning into a tree from which divine gifts from the gods were taken to bless men in the new year.

It is not many years since the Scottish Presbyterians and English Protestants refused all observance of this day, because it was pagan. But now the trend is toward observance of it in all religious bodies. This shows that our religious forms are increasingly Babylonian.

The 25th of March—Lady Day—has its place not only in the Roman calendar, but also is among the festivals of the Church of England. This is the supposed day of the

miraculous conception of the Virgin **Mary**. But among the heathen it was celebrated. At Rome it was a festival in honor of Cybele, the mother of the Babylonian Messiah. In Rome, Cybele was called Domina, or lady, hence our Lady Day.

Christmas and Lady Day are purely Babylonian. So also is Easter. What does the word Easter mean? It is not a Christian name. Easter is Ishtar, one of the titles of the Babylonian Queen of Heaven. It was the worship of this woman by the people of Israel which was such an abomination in the sight of God. (1 Sam. 7:3; Jer. 44:18.) Round cakes to this goddess were made at this festival. On these cakes was the sign of a cross, which, in the Babylonian mysteries, was a symbol of life. This festival was observed 1,500 years before Christ was born, and here is the origin of our Easter and the hot-cross buns. (See Mosheim's "History of Church," I., p. 370). Jeremiah's "cakes" are these hot-cross buns. (Jer. 7:18.)

The forty days Lent was taken from the worshippers at Babylon. It is observed to-day by the devil-worshippers of Kurdistan who got it from the same source. Humboldt found it practised by the pagan Mexicans; Wilkinson informs us it was a custom in ancient Egypt.

One is in good heathen company when he keeps Lent. It is the Devil's order of worship. It was his invention. There is nothing as to it in God's Word. Easter and Lent were introduced into the Church in the fifth century. The decree of observance was made in 519 A.D. A writer of the fifth century says: "The observance of Lent had no existence so long as the primitive Church remained inviolate." (Cassianus.)

The Easter eggs which now figure in connection with Easter were common to all heathen nations. The fable of the egg, in a word, is this: "An egg of wondrous size fell from heaven into the River Euphrates; the fishes rolled it to the bank, where doves having settled upon it, hatched it, and out came Astarte, the Goddess of Easter."

Babylon is said to be the mother of harlots, which means that Rome is not alone in her abominations. The spirit and order of Babylon is in other bodies; and every church that exalts these festivals and rites is to that extent a daughter of the harlot. May the Lord, who alone can open blind eyes, cause us to see the days in which we live, and to distinguish the things that differ. We have enough to occupy heart and mind if we keep the Lord's appointment; we need not mind Satan's.

Babylon in History

2

"Woe, woe, the great city, Babylon, the strong city! for in one hour is thy judgment come."—Rev. 18: 10.

In Rev. 17 we have a religious system. In Rev. 18 there is a commercial city. We have seen that Romanism is the chief representative of Babylonian doctrines and practices. The bulwark of Babylonianism is Roman Catholicism. According to this Word that system is to increase in power in the coming days (17: 8). Her destruction is to come at the hands of the last great power of whom we read in Rev. xiii. Romanism and all its allies is to perish at the hands of men. (Rev. 17: 16.)

The Babylon of ch. 18 comes to an end by Divine judgment. (Rev. 18: 21; Jer. 51: 63, 64.) Her doom, like that of Sodom and Gomorrah, is to come in one day and from heaven.

"In one day shall her plagues come, death and mourning and famine, and

she shall be utterly burned with fire: for strong is the Lord God who judgeth her" (18:8).

"In one hour is she made desolate" (18:19).

Babylon, it will be remembered, was the scene of the first confederated rebellion against Jehovah. We read:

"And it came to pass as they journeyed from the east that they found a plain in the land of Shinar and they dwelt there. And they said, Go to, let us build a city and a tower, whose top may reach unto heaven: and let us make us a name, lest we be scattered abroad upon the face of the whole earth." (Gen. 11:2.)

This was at the beginning of Babylon. Passing down the stream of time several centuries, in the time of Nebuchadnezzar, we find Babylon a great city. (Dan. 4:30.) The Hebrew prophets have much to say concerning her splendor, her wickedness and her doom.

Jeremiah has two long chapters on Babylon (50, 51). He says:

"Babylon! a golden cup in the Lord's hand, that hath made all the earth drunken" (51:7).

He gives us a lengthened account of Babylon's overthrow. *These predictions have never been fulfilled.* Babylon has never been uninhabited. Its history has been a checkered one, but it has never ceased to exist. In the time of Alexander the Great (B.C. 331) it was an important city. As late as the fifth century A.D. there were three Jewish schools there. In 1585 Bishop Otto wrote of it, "That portion of Babylon which is still occupied, is styled Baldach . . . it is large and populous." At the present time a city of 10,000 (Hillah) is located in the midst of the ruins of ancient Babylon.

We read:

"Babylon, the glory of kingdoms, the beauty of the Chaldees' excellency, shall be as when God overthrew Sodom and Gomorrah. It shall never be inhabited, neither shall it be dwelt in from generation to generation. . . ." (Isa. 13:19.)

In view of such statements we can come to but one conclusion, and that is that God's dealings with Babylon have not yet ended. Babylon has a future.

Future Babylon

Now, if Babylon has a future, if human energy is once more to operate in the valley of the Euphrates, it might be expected that the Scriptures would somewhere allude definitely to such an event.

Turning over the pages of Scripture we find much of events to take place in the land of which Babylon was the capital.

Zechariah makes it clear that commerce is to find its base there in the days before the Lord takes away the Gentiles' dominion (Zech. 5:5-11).

The ephah was the symbol of trade, and this vision clearly promises the restoration of trade to the Euphrates Valley. Rev. 17: bears concurrent witness. It supplements the testimony of the prophets. Here in the last days, on the eve of the Lord's coming, we have a great commercial city on the Euphrates. This is just what the Old Testament leads us to expect.

Babylon is to be rebuilt. A large and important city is to rise on the site of ancient Babylon, and become a political and commercial centre.

The fertility of the Euphrates Valley is

well known. No other portion of the earth excels it for possibilities.

You may ask, why has not this country been developed long ago? The answer is simple—because of the rulership of the Turk. As long as despotic Turkey holds undisputed sway no real development is possible.

Some years ago Col. Chesney wrote to the English Government concerning this land: "When its advantages are fully known, it will rise to a high degree of political and commercial importance. The navigation of the Euphrates belongs to universal civilization; its waters flow past the habitation of four millions of the human race. Its productions are fruits in abundance, cotton, wheat, hemp, silk, gold, silver, coffee, marble, etc. The Euphrates can be made navigable for 1,200 miles with little expense."

A glittering prize—a ripe apple! Into whose hand will it fall?

Turning now from Scripture, look at the condition of affairs in this land.

The Euphrates Valley Railway is in process of construction. Over \$25,000,000 has already been expended.

Germany is preparing to pour 40,000 people into the Euphrates Valley as colonists.

Sir Wm. Willcocks is at present engaged in restoring the lands along the Euphrates. He says, "Irrigation will restore the unrivalled ancient fertility of Mesopotamia, whilst modern scientific methods and machinery will make that land the most productive area in the whole world."

Once introduce Western civilization into the East and the rise of Babylonia will be rapid. This will be in the near future, if events progress as they have begun.

Parrot ("History of Art in Chaldea," I., p. 54) says, "There can be no doubt that the next generation will see the civilization of the West re-possess itself of the fertile plains in which it was born and nursed. . . . Peopled, irrigated and tilled into her remote corner, she would again become as prolific as of old, and would make her capital such a Babylon as the world has not yet seen." This is exactly what will come.

There is a book on the market ("Euphrates Valley Route"—W. P. Andrews) which strongly urges the reviving of the country along the Euphrates River. The author says, "Make the valley of the Euphrates the highway of commerce . . . it would change the face of the globe."

The late Gen. Napier said, "Civilization was travelling west in Alexander's time, now how changed is the drama. More than 2,000 years have passed and civilization arises on the rear of barbarism. We English have seized the baggage, are following up the blow and in a few years shall be at Babylon, a revived Empire." (Journal IV.: 70). Thus our notable men are looking to the East and expecting in that quarter great developments.

I have in my possession a book, "Babylon Rebuilt," by a French scientist, showing the possible grandeur of a new city built on the site of old Babylon.

Time is fast hastening those changes which will usher in the building of Babylon, the world's last great city, in which wealth will be combined with luxury and wickedness. All great cities have been godless, but according to the prophecy this will exceed them all.

HER FALL AT THE HANDS OF GOD ENDS
MAN'S DOMINION ON THIS EARTH. THE DO-
MINION SHALL THEN BE THE LORD'S FOR
EVER AND EVER. AND ANOTHER CITY WILL
COME INTO PROMINENCE. THE CITY WHOSE
DESIGNER AND BUILDER IS GOD. (Rev. 21:
10-27.)

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